

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY**  
*TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, CHAIRMAN*



***PRESS RELEASE***

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**Platts Applauds Executive Order Streamlining FOIA Processing**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Rep. Todd Russell Platts (R-PA-19), Chairman of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Management, Finance, and Accountability, joined President Bush as he signed an Executive Order aimed at improving the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

Platts has been working with the Administration since holding an oversight hearing on FOIA in May 2005. The changes, described in more detail below, are intended to improve the overall transparency of the FOIA process and to help agencies and citizens better track individual requests.

“One of the things our oversight has shown is that it’s difficult to navigate the process. Requesters don’t have a single point of contact or someone to call when they run into trouble. The Executive Order is a broad policy change designed to address these concerns – now agencies must take ownership of improving how they process FOIA requests,” said Rep. Platts.

The Executive Order designates a Chief FOIA Officer in each Federal Department to be responsible for streamlining the process of responding to FOIA requests. A plan of action for streamlining is due from each agency in six months, at which time each plan will be posted on the Internet. Implementation of the improvement plan must take place over the next two years.

Agencies will also be required to establish a FOIA Requester Service Center and designate Public Liaisons to provide a single point of contact for requesters. This step is intended to give the public more information about the status of request, to reduce backlogs, and to create an interactive relationship between the agency and the requestor.

“This puts a service-oriented focus on FOIA. It is a good start. By improving the operational aspect of FOIA compliance, we will be in a better position to look at any policy changes that might be needed,” Platts said.

Earlier this year, the Subcommittee on Government Management, Finance, and Accountability published *A Citizen’s Guide on Using the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974 to Request Government Records*.